

As he lay silent, motionless and bewildered under Nyssa's bed, Adric wished he had not tried to be so helpful that day. He had brought it on himself, of course. The Doctor had been building that odd piece of equipment for weeks, and finally Adric had let his curiosity get the better of him: he might find out what it was if the Doctor would only let him help in the construction. 'There must be **something** I can do,' he'd insisted when the Doctor refused his offer, and his persistent importunity had started the chain of events that led him here, trying not to betray his presence with so much as a breath..

Had the Doctor given him a fool's errand to get rid of him? His mission seemed to have nothing to do with the strange new machine: he was to go to the bedrooms of Tegan and Nyssa, steal a pair of each girl's panties, and bring them back to the Doctor. But what could the Doctor possibly want with them?

Tegan's room was bad enough. It took him ten minutes to locate the underwear drawer, and he'd been tempted to spend some time investigating just what Tegan wore beneath her prim mauve uniform. Adric thanked his stars that he had simply helped himself to the first pair to hand and made a quick exit; for no sooner was he out the door than Tegan appeared around the corner and made straight for her room. Adric hoped she wouldn't notice the open drawer as he made his way to carry out the second half of the job.

He was taking a little longer in Nyssa's bedroom when he heard the electronic ratchet engage, and dove under the bed clutching his prize as the door swished open. It was Nyssa, with Tegan in hot pursuit. 'You snuck into my room and you stole them,' twanged the Australian's strident voice.

'Honestly, Tegan, I didn't. And mine keep on going missing too!' Adric held his breath: Tegan had discovered the theft!

'You're just saying that! I know what you did! Well, I'm not taking this lying down!'

The middle of the bed jolted downwards, and the underside hit Adric in the small of his back, forcing the air out of his lungs. It looks as if she is lying down after all, he thought vaguely to himself, before a heavier impact in the same place knocked the wind from him again. 'I'll teach you to purloin my panties,' he heard Tegan say, followed by a sharp slap and a yelp of pain

from Nyssa.

Adric didn't understand what was going on. For five minutes the bed above him jiggled like crazy while the smacking noise alternated with the sounds of Nyssa's distress. Finally Adric felt the bedsprings ease up, and he could breathe more easily.

'There'll be more of that to come if you don't give them back!' snapped Tegan. The bed creaked as she got up. 'And don't count on having those velvet pants to protect you, either, because next time I'll be getting right to the seat of the trouble!' Adric heard the swish of the automatic door and started to relax. He could leave as soon as the coast was clear...

Once again the breath shot out of him as Nyssa flung herself facedown on the bed and started to sob.

'You took your time,' said the Doctor as Adric handed him the stolen undergarments. 'Which is which?'

'The black ones are Tegan's and the white ones are Nyssa's,' replied Adric. 'But, Doctor, why do you need them?'

'Patience.' The Doctor straightened out Tegan's panties and held them up by the top corners: they were made of black cotton trimmed with white at the waist and legs, and had a red rose embroidered on the front. 'Just pop them into the scanner.' He fed the panties into a slot in a control panel beside him.

Twenty seconds later, the slot ejected the panties. The Doctor caught them deftly, handed them to Adric and picked up Nyssa's panties, noting their similar design: white cotton trimmed with black at the waist and legs, with an embroidered daisy on the front. Into the slot they went, and flew out again after another twenty seconds. This time they hit Adric in the face.

'Doctor, what *is* all this about?' It wasn't just irritation in his voice as he pulled Nyssa's panties off his nose. The Doctor detected impatience there too: it was time to explain.

'Fabric has a memory of sorts. You can see it if you wear the same suit of

clothes for long enough: they start to take on something of your body shape. But it begins the first time you put on a garment: the material retains the impression. It doesn't show to the naked eye, but this scanner can read those impressions from the fibres.'

'I understand the principle, Doctor, but why do...'

The chime of a bell cut into Adric's question. 'Aha,' said the Doctor, 'it's finished rendering. Now if you look at this screen I'll show you.'

He pressed a switch, and the screen sprang into dull greenish life. On it Adric saw the firm, round cheeks and deep cleft of a female bottom, slowly rotating on a vertical axis. As it reached the side, the movement gently reversed itself and the bottom began to turn the other way.

'It's a woman's buttocks,' said Adric, mystified.

'To be precise, it's an exact mathematical model of Tegan's bottom, constituted using the block transfer process using the information I scanned from her panties.' He pressed another switch and the image changed. 'And this is Nyssa's bottom.'

Adric stared, mesmerized by the slow, sashaying motion of the bare bottom on the screen. 'They don't look that different to me,' he said.

'Oh, I can assure you that Nyssa and Tegan are very different whichever end you look at. That's why I needed to make these simulacra, to get the calibration absolutely accurate.'

'But I still don't...' said Adric as the Doctor snapped off the screen.

'Now I wonder if you'd be very helpful and put these back,' said the Doctor briskly, handing Adric the panties. 'With luck the girls won't even have noticed they were gone.'

Adric's shoulders drooped as he abandoned his question and set off on his second bedroom mission of the day.

'Stop that at once, Tegan!' Tegan's hands sprang away from where they

were grappling with the waistband of Nyssa's pants, and she looked up at the Doctor, his face dark with rage.

Nyssa struggled to her feet as the Doctor's long stride took him across the room. He took Tegan by the arm. 'You know what I said would happen if I caught you bullying Nyssa again.' Tegan felt the upward pressure of his grip forcing her to stand, propelling her towards the door. 'You'd better come along, Nyssa. This concerns you too.'

Nyssa followed in reluctant embarrassment. However relieved she was at the Doctor's last-minute rescue, she had no great desire to witness Tegan's punishment. But she also knew better than to disobey the Doctor when he was in this mood, and tagged along after him as he led his Australian companion silently through the corridors of the TARDIS.

'Doctor, why are we going into your laboratory?' asked Nyssa, aware that he usually took her someplace else for punishments. Tegan had wondered the same thing, but hadn't dared speak.

'We're going to test a new invention of mine,' replied the Doctor with a breezy, upbeat tone that belied his earlier fury. 'Tegan, you stand there,' he said, indicating a rostrum beside a piece of equipment she had never seen before.

Tegan felt a little of her confidence return: maybe she had got away with it this time after all. She looked at the new machine covered in knobs and dials. 'It looks like a bucking bronco ride from a fairground,' she said, noticing its padded saddle-like top.

'That isn't one of the moving parts,' said the Doctor, flicking a switch. 'Unlike where you're standing.' Tegan felt the rostrum jerk upwards beneath her, and in a moment she had been hoisted four feet into the air and deposited facedown over the top of the machine. A glowing red light streaked around her waist and pushed her firmly down onto the padding.

Tegan lay there bottom-up, supported from mid-torso to mid-thigh, her legs sticking out horizontally behind her with no hope of reaching the ground. It was a position she knew only too well. 'Don't tell me this thing is what I think it is,' she said, the edginess creeping back into her voice.

'It's a spanking machine,' said the Doctor brightly, tapping away at an input keyboard. 'Since I now have two female companions, I decided there might come a time when I needed some help dealing with you both. So I built this.' His eyes surveyed his invention with pride. 'Multiple punishment options, simulating hand, hairbrush, slipper and cane. Modifiable speed and duration settings, automatic clothing removal facility, not to mention the forcefield grip you're experiencing right now. And everything precisely calibrated to the individual shape and resilience of the recipient's own bottom. A machine that can give you a truly personalized spanking.' He reached for a dial and turned it to point to 'Tegan'. Nyssa saw three more blank dial positions after 'Tegan', then gulped as the Doctor took his hand away and she noticed her own name.

The Doctor pulled a large red lever, and the spanking machine whirred into life. 'I'm pleased with this feature,' he said. 'It's always something I found it hard to do myself.'

A pair of wire clips emerged from inside the machine, hooked themselves under the hem of Tegan's mauve skirt, and began to draw it upwards. The Doctor glanced at Nyssa's tight-fitting velvet outfit. 'There's another attachment for taking down pants,' he remarked, continuing, 'And panties, should it be necessary.' Tegan let out a squeal of apprehension. 'Which, on this occasion it, isn't,' he added.

That didn't seem to relieve Tegan much. Her legs waved helplessly in the air and her fists beat on the side of the machine to no avail. Nyssa watched, as if fixated by the slow concertina movement of Tegan's skirt, exposing her rounded thighs inch by inch. Finally it reached the tops of her legs and began to draw the skirt up over the swell of her bottom. Nyssa gasped as Tegan's black panties came into view with their distinctive white edging.

She watched, momentarily stunned, as a gleaming mechanical arm shot forcefully from the side of the machine, raised itself high over Tegan's struggling, upturned form and began to spank her uncovered bottom. 'I'll get even with you for this, Doctor,' shouted the Australian between grimaces and yelps.

Nyssa had other things on her mind. She turned to the Doctor and said, 'Now I know where my panties have been disappearing to.'

The Doctor frowned. 'You mean those are your black panties? Not Tegan's?'

'I'd know them anywhere, Doctor. They belong to a set. I'm wearing the other pair now, and before you ask, I'm not telling you what color *they* are!'

Adric smirked to himself in his hidingplace behind the workbench. He was pretty sure he knew already.

'I wasn't going to ask, actually,' said the Doctor.

'My panties have been going missing for weeks,' Nyssa continued. 'I had wondered if Adric was stealing them, but now we know the truth.' She raised her voice to be sure Tegan could hear over the sound of slaps and her own cries. 'Maybe she deserves another session on the spanking machine after this one. And I hope it won't damage *my panties* when it pulls them down!' And with that she turned on her heel and strode out of the laboratory to retrieve the rest of her property from Tegan's room. The Doctor looked concerned, and cursed himself for not checking his calculations better. Hadn't Adric thought the two scanned bottoms looked similar on the screen? But now it was too late: all he could do was let the machine complete its program, and do the calculations again before Tegan earned herself another automatic spanking. For the one she was getting now was designed for Nyssa's bottom instead.

The spanking continued inexorably, and it was a sobbing, chastened Tegan who left the laboratory at the end of it. But at least, reflected the Doctor, she really did deserve it and she really had brought it on herself. He moved to disconnect the machine, then turned to see Adric sitting at the workbench. 'Did the equipment do what you wanted, Doctor?' he asked.

'Ah, Adric,' said the Doctor, a little flustered at the boy's unexpected presence. 'I have another little job for you.'

'It didn't, did it?' persisted Adric. He had enjoyed seeing the bossy Australian get her comeuppance, but he could tell there was something wrong, and knew somehow that it had to do with the two girls' panties.

'Teething troubles,' said the Doctor. He met Adric's quizzical gaze and realized he needed to say more. 'I told you that Nyssa and Tegan have very

different bottoms. Nyssa's is full and fleshy, whereas Tegan's is firm and compact. So I've always found it takes a lot more force to make the same impact on Nyssa.'

'You mean you have to spank her harder than Tegan,' said Adric knowingly.

'When necessary, yes,' replied the Doctor, unsure whether to be relieved or worried at how well Adric had understood him. 'Which is why the machine had to be precisely calibrated to suit the individual bottom of each girl. Now will you please fetch me another pair of Tegan's panties so I can get it right this time?'

'Alright. But there's one thing I still don't understand, Doctor,' said Adric as he moved to the laboratory door. 'You built the machine because you might have to give both girls a spanking, and there's only one of you.' The Doctor nodded. 'But you don't need a machine to do that for you,' Adric continued.

'I don't?'

'No, Doctor. Why didn't you just ask me?'